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THE BAPTIST

FEB 18 1997

# Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Cuban Baptists learn to flex with wind

By Mary E. Speidel  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

MANTANZAS, Cuba (BP) — Sitting outdoors at the Baptist camp near Mantanzas, Cuba, Nilo Dominguez points to some nearby palm trees.

"Notice when the wind blows, they lean a little bit," says Dominguez, a Baptist pastor. "If they didn't, the wind might break them."

That says something about the Cuban himself. "Being flexible helps me to stay here," Dominguez says. "Staying hasn't been easy."

but God has called him to Cuba. Dominguez and the convention's 60-plus pastors have plenty of work to do.

All of them serve at least two congregations. Some also teach a full load of classes at the 39-student Baptist seminary in Havana.

As worshippers fill El Cerro Baptist Church in Havana, Veguilla is using an electric organ to play the hymn, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee."

Like many of the convention's veteran pastors, Veguilla, 66, learned keyboard skills from Marjorie Caudill, former Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) missionary to Cuba.

HMB maintained relationships with Cuban Baptists until 1989, when the work was transferred to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB).

In the 1960s, Veguilla, Dominguez and Caudill's late husband, Herbert, were among about 50 Baptists in Cuba held as political prisoners by the Cuban government.

"Prison was my second seminary," says Veguilla, who used the time to plan for future ministry and meet spiritual needs of people around him.

Interacting with him and other Cuban Baptists left a lasting impression on some Southern Baptist leaders who visited Cuba.

Led by FMB President Jerry Rankin, the team spent Jan. 17-21 observing Cuban Baptist work and preaching in churches.

"We really sensed God's spirit moving in Cuba," said Rankin of his first trip to the island nation.

"(Cuban Baptist) leaders have a very distinct vision and an optimism in God's providence. They're walking in victory," he said.

"Cuban Baptists are seeing the response we've all prayed and hoped for, for a long time," added Avery Willis, FMB senior vice president for overseas operations.

"We saw God doing a work through the churches. The members are vibrant, active, very intent on being good disciples of Christ," he said.

That shows in convention statistics. In 1989 annual baptisms stood at 306. By 1992 that figure had jumped to 1,052, a 244% increase.



**BROTHERS IN CHRIST** — At the Baptist seminary in Havana, Cuba, Wendell Estep (right), pastor of First Church, Columbia, S.C., gives a word of encouragement to Leoncio Veguilla, the seminary's rector. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

During the past four years, the annual total has hovered around 2,000. In that same four-year period, Cuban Baptists started 40 churches.

The convention currently reports 145 churches and 100 mission congregations, and is gaining a broader vision of missions, too.

Last year the convention's churches, for the first time in more than 30 years, received gifts for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

During Rankin's trip to the island, Dominguez and other Cuban Baptist leaders often expressed their thanks for Southern Baptists' help and support.

A comment from Dominguez especially touched Rankin:

"There have been times when we didn't have much materially, but those haven't been our greatest needs."

"What we really needed was someone just to be there and put their arms around us. You as Southern Baptists have done that for us."

"It's made such a difference."



**FULL HOUSE** — Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin (at pulpit) preaches to a packed congregation at Calvary Baptist Church in Havana, Cuba. Translating is Ronald Wilson (left), who directs the board's work in the Caribbean. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

For Dominguez, it's a deliberate choice. President of the Western Baptist Convention of Cuba, he has traveled to the U.S. 10 times in recent years.

He could have emigrated to America,

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### B&H books make CBA lists

In a first for the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman Publishers (B&H), three books made January best-seller lists of the Christian Booksellers Association (CBA) Marketplace.

The B&H edition of "Experiencing God" by Henry Blackaby and Claude King ranked 12th in the clothbound nonfiction category; "Anonymous Tip," a novel by Michael Parris, was 10th on the paperback fiction list; and the "Here's Hope NIV New Testament" ranked ninth in the best-selling mass-market paperbacks category.

B&H Publisher Ken Stephens said he anticipates seeing more projects rising to the top. "We have put together a stellar list of titles for our fall 1997 catalog, and in the near future B&H will become recognized as a consistent producer of 'best-seller' caliber products," he said.

January CBA Marketplace lists were based on actual sales in Christian retail stores in the United States and Canada during November 1996.

### Looking back

#### 10 years ago

A new Southern Baptist organization — the Southern Baptist Alliance — is formed to counter what leaders call a threat to the denomination's "historical principles, freedoms and traditions." Leaders say the group would not field a candidate for SBC president.

#### 20 years ago

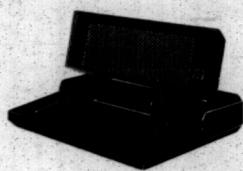
Roxie Nesmith, a member of Southside Church in Yazoo City, began reading "The Baptist Record" when the publication was only 14 years old. Born in 1880, she is still active in the programs of the church and attends regularly. Her husband, a retired Yazoo City policeman, died in 1964 at age 80.

#### 50 years ago

William Cook Rogers of Toomsba, for 84 years a Baptist and a deacon for 70 years, celebrates his 100th birthday. He has lived under 23 presidents and through five U.S. wars, entering the Confederate Army when he was 17 years of age.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# The time is now to make a difference

A pair of news items appeared in recent weeks that didn't receive a great deal of publicity, and therefore could easily be overlooked with regard to our Great Commission task.

The first news item served as yet another wake-up call for lackadaisical Christians in the fast-approaching "post-Christian era" that is descending upon America.

The second news item dealt with a man who really did practice what he preached.

The two items might appear incongruous, but only to unbelievers and those who don't take seriously their Christianity.

Both are important object lessons for the times in which we live.

The first item concerned Faith Popcorn (yes, that's her name), a woman to whom Fortune 500 corporations pay thousands of dollars for advice on trends in American culture.

The corporations are willing to pay big money to Popcorn because her professional record is nothing short of phenomenal when it comes to spotting trends that might affect a business's product line and therefore its bottom line.

She virtually invented the term "cocooning," to describe the trend in this country toward spending huge amounts of time at home instead of in the greater community.

Popcorn also penned "The Popcorn Report" and "Clicking," both best sellers.

So when she describes in "Leadership Journal," a quarterly magazine for pastors, what she sees as a final ten-year window of opportunity to reach present-day unspiritual people before they permanently turn away, we should sit up and take note.

"I think there's a universal consciousness that the planet is in trouble ecologically — which I think is spiritual.

"If you're going to have a successful spiritual organization, this would be the next ten years to do it," she said.

While those words from Popcorn, who is Jewish, have a sort of New Age sound combined with the hard-edged language of the business world, Christians would be well-advised to study the big picture she is describing.

We Christians already know the world is "in trouble" — spiritual trouble.

We also know that our Lord is depending on us to be his "successful spiritual organization" — one with a burning passion to share the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ with everyone on Earth.

If Popcorn is right that we have only ten more years to make a difference in the lives of unbelievers, we'd better get to work right now spreading the Good News of Jesus.

Sure, every Christian wants the heathens on another continent to be saved, but what about the fellow in the cubicle right next to you at work?

Do you know with certainty that he has accepted Christ and will live forever in the presence of the Heavenly Father?

What about your next-door neighbor and your golfing buddy? Are you certain they've received salvation?

If you're not certain, it's time — past time, actually — to talk with them. Make a difference in people's lives before it's too late for them, and don't wait ten years or ten months or even ten minutes.

Do it now.

The weight of that last statement is driven home by the second news item.

Andrew Meekens was one of those who died in the November 1996 drunken hijacking of the Ethiopian Airlines jet that ran out



of fuel and crashed into the ocean near the Comoros Islands off the coast of Africa.

Survivors report that Meekens, an elder in the International Evangelical Church of Addis Ababa, Ehtiopia, spent the last precious moments of his life sharing the Gospel and pleading with unsaved passengers to accept Christ.

A flight attendant who survived the crash reported that at least 20 people accepted Meeker's invitation, including a fellow flight attendant who did not survive.

Popcorn's ideas are as much theory as Meeker's final actions were concrete, but taken together, there can be only one conclusion:

We need to be about the Savior's business.

There once was a time when courtship consisted of a cave man spotting a cave girl, hitting her with his club, and then dragging her away by the hair to his own cave house — or so says the cartoon version of caveperson courtship.

Of course, this was before the advent of women's lib. That's when things started to change.

The change really started, though, not with a group of outraged woman, but with men.

Every cave girl had a cave daddy. Eventually, one of those cave daddies saw this brutal ritual of courtship and decided that it was too much.

The daddy figured that if the cave boy wanted his cave daughter bad enough the boy would be willing to pay something for her.

Soon, this became the standard procedure. The cave boy would pay the cave daddy for the right to club the cave girl and drag her by the hair to his cave house. Or something like that.

This system of courtship dominated romance for a few millennia. It became more civilized; the clubbing was out, along with the dragging by the hair.

The payoff changed from a few shells, to a few heads of cat-

## A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE:



### Life and love... after the Stone Age

By Carl M. White, Associate Editor

tle, to gold coins — but the basic principle remained the same.

Boy meets girl. Boy wants girl. Boy pays dad to take girl. Dad smiles all the way to the bank.

Then enlightenment came. Now you can ask the girl yourself without having to pay dad for the privilege.

For a long time this was considered to be a very private sort of thing. You got alone with your sweetheart to ask the question. Oddly, things have become more public.

Do you remember when sportscaster Ahmad Rashad proposed to "The Cosby Show" co-star Phylicia Ayers-Allen live on a pre-game show?

People have used airplanes to sky-write proposals and billboards to broadcast proposals.

One fellow even used a

crossword puzzle to pop the question to his love.

Perhaps the best of all was done by one Michael Bujdos, a first grade teacher in western Pa., as told in the February edition of "Smithsonian" by Michael Kernan, a hopeless romantic.

Bujdos called his high school sweetheart, Jean, and asked her to help him with a class project. She agreed.

When she got to the school Bujdos said the kids had an art project they wanted her to see.

The first-graders lined up at the blackboard in the front of the classroom.

Jean thought something might be up, but she stood where she was told. Then Bujdos told the children to show Jean what they had made in class.

At that, the children held up their poster boards they had

been nervously holding behind their backs.

They spelled the words, "Will you marry Mr. B?"

Jean was stunned. She blinked and looked at it again.

For a long moment everyone stood there waiting her answer, kids' mouths open, Bujdos holding his breath.

The she said, "Yes!" The kids starting jumping up and down, laughing and shouting, "She said yes! She said yes! She said yes!"

That's the way I felt 20 years ago this past Christmas. She said "yes!"

We've come a long way since prehistoric courtship, and to think, this thing we call romantic love is really but a mere reflection of a much greater love.

I am convinced that any time a man and a woman love each other with the kind of unselfish commitment that makes a marriage work we come as close as we might on this earth to the love of God.

Whether you're going to pop the question for the first time, or you are approaching that golden anniversary, bring a little creativity to your expressions of love.

It will help you rediscover and keep that initial excitement when she first said "yes, I will."



# Peagler selected for Discipleship lead

By Tim Nicholas  
MBCB Communications Director

Marcus Peagler, 39, minister of education at Broadmoor Church,

Jackson, was tapped Wednesday, February 5, as the new director of the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention

Board (MBCB).

The MBCB executive committee, meeting in the Baptist Building in Jackson, chose Peagler to replace Mose Dangerfield, who retired in January.

Jackson native Peagler, a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi and New Orleans Seminary, will begin his new duties on March 3.

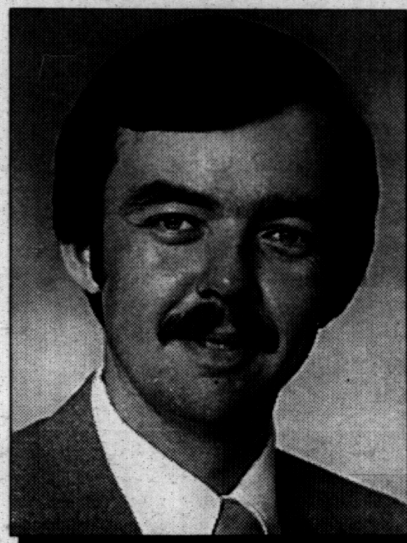
He previously served at Hickory Church, Hickory; First Church, Butler, Ala.; and Southside Church, Meridian.

Peagler has been a growth specialist and Sunday School Breakthrough consultant.

The executive committee also approved purchase of equipment up to \$158,350, including four new copy machines, an image setter and processor (negative maker), printing press, folder, digital duplicator, and S-VHS video recorder-player.

The executive committee approved additional funds totaling \$80,000 to produce and broadcast a series of 30-second television and radio spots across the state to place emphasis on church attendance, Bible reading, and prayer.

In other business, the committee approved the painting of the Gulfshore Assembly staff house for up to \$7,900 and the



Peagler

trade-in of the executive director's automobile and purchase of a 1997 automobile for up to \$13,700.

John Sharp of Harperville was selected to fill the unexpired MBCB term of Robert J. Sanderson who resigned to accept the DOM position at Scott-Newton Association.



THE  
SECOND  
FRONT PAGE

## 1997 Brown-Davis Award



Don Wilson (center), director of the Missions Extension and Associational Administration Department of the MBCB presents the 1997 Brown-Davis Award for Racial Reconciliation to Dan Howard (left), pastor of Woodville Church, Mississippi Association, and Rossie Francis (right), pastor of Grace Temple Church, Gulf Coast Association, during the state evangelism conference at Broadmoor Church, Jackson.

**Record**  
THE BAPTIST

# Kelleys headline Equipping Institute

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Charles S. "Chuck" Kelley, Jr, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS), and his wife, Rhonda H. Kelley, a professor at NOBTS, will be featured speakers at the 1997 Institute for Equipping Churches BEYOND 2000, Feb. 27 through March 1, 1997 at Ridgecrest Church in Madison.

The Equipping Institute is an all-purpose training event designed to provide quality training in one place and one time for an

entire church leadership team. This is the third year for this type of equipping event.

The Equipping Institute begins on Thursday, Feb. 27 at 8:30 a.m. with a senior adult rally, and goes through Saturday noon. All the sessions except one will be held at Ridgecrest Church. The Drama Festival will be held on Friday, Feb. 28 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Woodland Hills Church, Jackson.

President and Mrs. Kelley are the featured speakers on Thursday evening for the pastor/staff banquet and minister's wives seminar. A complimentary banquet will be served at 5:00 p.m. Following the banquet, Chuck Kelley will speak to pastors and staff while Rhonda Kelley will speak to minister's wives.

Reservations are necessary for the banquet and can be made by contacting Jan Cossitt by Feb. 24 at P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Chuck Kelley, is a native of Beaumont, Texas. He is a graduate of Baylor University and NOBTS, with both the Master of Divinity and Doctorate of Theology degrees. Kelley has been a professor of evangelism at NOBTS since 1983. He was ordained to the Gospel ministry in 1972 by First Church, Beaumont, Texas.

Rhonda Kelley, wife of NOBTS president Chuck Kelley, is a native of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She holds two degrees from Baylor University, including a Masters in Speech Pathology and Audiology, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Special Education and Speech Pathology from the University of New Orleans. She has served as a speech pathologist consultant for Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans, as well as an adjunct professor at the NOBTS school of Christian Training. She is well known as



Chuck and Rhonda Kelley

Christian speaker and writer.

Other activities at the institute include: a singles rally, age group leadership training, deacon training, a doctrine study overview, special study overviews such as "Experiencing God" and "Truth Matters," Sunday School leadership training, Discipleship Training leadership events, outreach training, and family ministry training.

For more information or to make banquet reservations, contact: Jan Cossitt at P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside of Jackson (800) 748-1651.

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dewayne Beaty — minister of senior adults, Longview, Tex.  
Faye Brown — author, humorist, Moundville, Ala.  
David Carter — adult Discipleship Training specialist, BSSB  
Bill Causey — executive director/treasurer, MBCB  
Neal Cordle — adult consultant, BSSB  
Mose Dangerfield — retired Discipleship and Family Ministry director, MBCB  
Al Fike — comedian, Garland, Tex.  
Johnnie Foster — dramatist, Aberdeen, Miss.  
John Gilbert — pastor, Poplar Bluff, Mo.  
James Hargrave — children's consultant, BSSB  
Kay Henry — preschool consultant, BSSB  
Jerri Herring — consultant, BSSB  
Mark Lott — youth consultant, MBCB  
Ken Marler — consultant, BSSB  
Ron Mumbower — minister of counseling, Jackson, Miss.  
Gene Nabi — special education consultant, BSSB  
Bob Norsworthy — deacon, Brandon, Miss.  
Joey Rodgers — minister with singles, Jackson, Miss.  
Glenn Shows — Discipleship & Family Ministry consultant, MBCB



# 106-year-old supports strong Foundation

By Jane Newell  
Mississippi Baptist Foundation

In January 1997, Irene Laird of Seminary celebrated her 106th birthday.

Also in 1997, she celebrates 54 years of supporting her local church, the work of the Baptist Children's Village (BCV) and educating young men and women who are committed to helping win Mississippi and the world to Jesus.



She has chosen to do much of this through the Mississippi Baptist Foundation (MBF).

It was in 1963 that Laird first established a MBF fund; later she added two other funds.

These funds continue to provide financial support for BCV and scholarship money for educating Christian young people who are preparing for the ministry, according to her daughter, Louise Speed of Seminary.

Born January 17, 1891, in

Jones County, Irene Easterling Laird was the sixth child of John and Susan Easterling. She had three brothers and five sisters.

She readily recalls vivid memories of being raised on a working farm. There were cows to milk, pigs to raise, and chickens to tend.

Most all of their food was raised and prepared on the farm, she said. The work was hard and the hours were long.

She also fondly remembers riding in the family buggy "with the fringe on the top," hitched to a team of horses. The horses were shod, with iron shoes and spikes.

In 1903, at the age of 12, she accepted Christ as her savior and was baptized. Ever since, meditation, prayer, Bible study, and her church have been an important part of her life.

She was educated in Collins, finishing her school work in 1907. Laird passed the state teacher's exam that same year.

In December 1911, she married Lawrence J. Weixel. They made their home in Louisiana where they had one child, Louise.

Weixel died in 1913, so Irene and her little girl moved back to Mississippi, where she married W. E. Laird in 1926.

They make their home near Collins where they were members of Willow Grove Church.

Over the years Irene Laird has seen many things come and go. She lived through two world wars and the Great Depression.

She has seen 19 men occupy the White House, the first being Benjamin Harrison.

In her lifetime came the zipper (1893), motion pictures (1894), wireless telegraphy (1898), the caterpillar tractor (1900), the airplane (1903), the jet engine (1928), the first television camera (1928), the transistor (1947), the first men in space (1960) and the first men on the moon (1969).

She was born in the age of oil and gas lamps, and has lived to see the birth of the computer age.

Most important, though, is the legacy of giving she began and now passes on to her daughter.

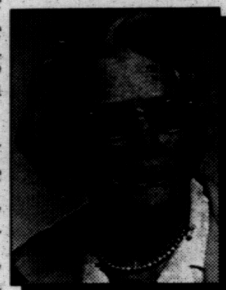
For 47 years, Speed has been taking care of her mother, who is still able to live at home.

Their pastor for the past 15 years, Billy Purser, said, "there are none more supportive of their pastor or loyal to Christ's church and his cause than Mrs. Irene Laird and (Frank and Louise) Speed."

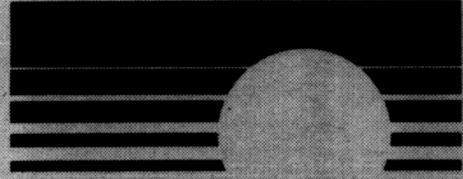
"Only in eternity can it be revealed how many souls have been touched for Christ through the unselfish efforts of this family."

For more information on MBF, contact executive director Hal Fisher at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Associate Editor Carl M. White contributed to this article.



Laird



**Season of Prayer  
for  
Home Missions**

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**Start Something New**

**CHURCH STARTING**

**MARCH 2-9**

## Miss. CP gifts set new record pace

Record-setting Cooperative Program (CP) gifts in January from Mississippi Baptist churches totaled nearly three million dollars, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which disburses the funds.

The total was \$2,922,651 — \$77,349 shy of the three-million-dollar mark, outstripping by \$336,485 the previous record month of January 1996 at \$2,586,166.

Last year was another record year for CP in Mississippi with gifts totaling \$24,388,170, con-

tinuing a seven-year trend of record-high gifts.

The 1997 CP budget of \$24,145,086, requires \$2,012,090.50 per month.

CP gifts help fund the salaries of home and foreign missionaries, the operation of six Southern Baptist seminaries, and missions and ministries in Mississippi.

CP also helped fund the Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference on Jan. 27-28; the upcoming reconciliation seminar on Feb. 10; and the church weekday education clinic in Hattiesburg on Feb. 15.

## SBC CP gifts down for January

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) receipts for January were down 7.66% compared to last year's January, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee, while CP gifts for the fiscal year remained 6.87% ahead of the previous year.

January 1997 CP gifts totaled \$14,075,108, compared to January 1996 of \$15,241,892, a difference of \$1,166,784 or 7.66%.

For the four months of the SBC fiscal year, CP gifts totaled \$51,529,813 compared to the same period a year ago of \$48,216,077, a difference of \$3,313,736 or 6.87%.

The SBC CP Allocation Budget requires a monthly total of \$12,087,791. Compared to that figure, the January gifts exceeded the budget requirement by \$1,987,317 or 16.44%.

For year-to-date gifts compared to the budget requirements, the budget has been exceeded by \$3,178,647 or 6.57% for the first four months of the fiscal year.

Designated gifts for January were \$19,798,348 compared to last year's January of \$17,249,997,

a difference of \$2,548,351 or an increase of 14.77%.

For the year to date, designated gifts of \$26,697,192 exceeded the previous year's period of \$25,593,105 by \$1,104,087 or an increase of 4.31%.

The SBC CP total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions, and fellowships for distribution according to the 1996-97 CP Allocation Budget.

CP is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the SBC.

Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, world hunger, and other special gifts.

State and regional conventions retain a percentage of CP contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas, and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries.

The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state or regional convention.

## Evangelists' Profile

This space is dedicated to Mississippi men and women who have committed themselves to vocational evangelism. Churches are encouraged to take advantage of their talents in helping to reap the harvest.



### This week's evangelist

Steve Walker  
Pinola

Years in ministry: 11  
Education: University of Southern Mississippi

Places of service: Mississippi  
Pastor ministry: Leading revival music (choir, congregational singing, and special events) and ministering in crusades

Family: Married, two children



# MBIB slates annual meeting for April 18-19

By Wayne Pierce  
First Church, Hattiesburg

Every church with a television ministry has at least one thing in common — to share the message of the gospel through Sunday services by reaching out to:

— viewers who can't attend church because of illness.

— the viewer God has flipping through the channels at home and stopping at your service because he sees someone he knows (never expecting to stop at a church service) and staying to hear a message that was intended for him.

— the elderly who love God with all of their heart but can't come to church anymore.

— the newcomer to town looking for a church home.

There are miracle stories of someone watching the services and being touched by the Holy Spirit in ways only God understands.

How many other uses are there for a television ministry? How many budget presentations are given to the church on video?

How many churches are using a video message for prospective members?

What youth group doesn't see a video after their trip or Disciple Now weekend? How many homebound members see a videotaped Sunday school lesson?

How many churches apply ideas for their services or programs by watching a video of the way a successful church is doing something?

There are many uses of this medium as there are imaginative ideas.

Mississippi Baptists in Broadcasting (MBIB) is a group of churches who are using the mediums of television and radio.

MBIB is led by Farrell Blankenship, director of broadcast services at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Members of MBIB gather each April for fellowship, training, and support from others who are facing or have overcome problems.

The year's gathering will take place April 18-19 at Calvary Church, Jackson.

One of the highlights of this annual

meeting is the awards banquet on Friday night.

It is a time to discover new uses for the broadcast medium.

First Church, Hattiesburg, won a number of awards last year and has been selected to judge this year's entries.



**Eleventh**  
**Mississippi Baptists**  
**In Broadcasting**

Calvary Church, Jackson, April 18-19

Any church that has produced a video, radio spot, or program is invited to enter.

There are two video categories:

◆ Division II for churches using professional broadcast-type video equipment).

◆ Division I for churches using non-professional home type video equipment.

The video does not have to have been broadcast on a television station to qualify.

For more information, contact Blankenship at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

## Dangerfield's life full of changes lately

By Tim Nicholas  
MBCB Communications Director

Retirement itself was nice for Mose Dangerfield, but his "glory hallelujah time" came three days after retiring as director of the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

He retired on Jan. 31 and on Feb. 3, he took his last dose of chemotherapy.

The therapy, doctors told him, was just a precaution after colon cancer surgery last June.

Dangerfield, a native of

Monck's Corner, S.C., completed 20 years of MBCB service at his retirement.

He said finishing the chemotherapy regimen made looking ahead to retirement much more pleasurable.

Dangerfield is planning more fishing (quoting the first part of John 21:3), and will continue his work as music director at Ogden Church, Bentonla.

Dangerfield said he wants to do what the last layman president of the Southern Baptist Convention, the late industrialist Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, said he'd want to do — spend more

time with people and work to disciple more of them.

"That has to be done one-on-one," Dangerfield said.

Part of the personal touch in discipling has been a teacher trainer class he utilized in several churches while on staff, and now advocates to others.

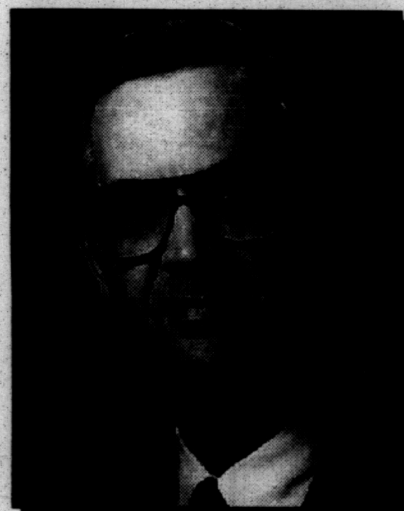
"You grab a dozen or so fringe members and watch them change into maturing Christians who become active in the church," he said.

Many, he added, are now leaders and Sunday School teachers.

By the time Dangerfield was noticed by then-Sunday School director Bryant Cummings and invited to join the MBCB's Sunday School staff in 1977, he had served a stint in the U.S. Marine Corps, graduated from the University of South Carolina with a degree in business education, and earned a master of religious education from New Orleans Seminary.

After six years in Sunday School consulting work, he was tapped in 1983 to direct the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department upon the retirement of Kermit King.

Christian education is what Dangerfield has primarily done



Dangerfield

since he committed himself to a church-related vocation after his sophomore year of college.

"I realized my calling was in religious education. That's where the Lord opened up doors," he said.

The Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association recently gave him the group's first annual excellence in leadership award.

To help with his Ogden Church music duties, Dangerfield is taking a class in voice at the New Orleans Seminary extension program at Broadmoor Church, Jackson, working toward a certificate in church music.

He and his wife Kathleen live in Clinton. They have two grown daughters and one granddaughter.

**WINTER**

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## Corrections

The date for Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin's keynote address to the Rankin Association annual missions rally was incorrectly stated on page five of the Feb. 6 issue. The correct date is Feb. 20.

First Church Oloh, Sumrall, was incorrectly identified as First Church, Sumrall, on page nine of the Jan. 16 issue.



# Difficulties forged missionary's career

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Believe what you hear about Thurmon Bryant.

"Christian gentleman." "Sterling character." "Caring and compassionate." "Superb missionary." "Gifted administrator."

"Wise counselor." "Hard worker." "Ambassador for missions."

It's all true, though he won't admit it. Add "unassumingly modest" to the list.

For all the praise lavished on Bryant as he retires Jan. 31 from the Foreign Mission Board (FMB) after 36 years, he would be the first to admit nothing came easily.

As the Apostle Paul noted, godly character is refined by perseverance during difficult times.

The 12th of 13 children, Bryant worked as hard in school as he did in the cotton fields. In seminary, he juggled the

responsibilities of family, pastorate, teaching and writing a thesis.

As a missionary in Brazil for 17 years, he served as pastor; founded, managed, and taught in a seminary; oversaw con-

struction of missionary houses; and made long weekend preaching trips to outlying churches.

In the midst of that, he and his wife, Doris, lost a 13-year-old son in a drowning accident.

That heartbreak — unimaginable to someone who hasn't experienced it — jolted him into realizing how precious and short life is and convinced him to make the best use of each moment God gives.

"Thurmon was the first person my wife, Noreta, and I met when we stepped off the ship in Brazil in 1965," said Bill Morgan, a former missionary to Brazil who now directs the FMB's Creative Access Network.

"He took us under his wing and helped us get settled, and he was our first pastor in Brazil.

"He is one of the most gracious, godly men you will ever meet. He has a caring heart, and he really ministers to people," Morgan said.

Bryant's love for people explains the affection many Brazilians still feel for him even 20 years after he returned to the United States to accept an administrative position at the board's Richmond, Va., headquarters, said Ann Fallaw, a former missionary who now serves as associate director of the agency's work in Brazil and the Caribbean.

"Thurmon and Doris were the exemplary missionary couple," Fallaw said. "They valued the Brazilians highly, and they made strong and lasting friendships with them. He's almost

revered in Brazil today."

After 10 years coordinating the board's work in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay, administrators singled him out for a new associate vice presidency.

He took on the enormous job of managing policy matters for more than 3,800 missionaries in more than 100 countries, as well as supervising the programs of missionary health, human needs and volunteers.

Six years later he was promoted to vice president of mission personnel to oversee the process that sends more than 500 people each year into career and short-term missionary service.

Through difficult years marked by major board restructuring and turmoil in the Southern Baptist Convention, Bryant helped keep the FMB on track, said Don Kammerdiener, FMB executive vice president.

"Many people approach missions from an anecdotal, rhetorical basis, but Thurmon approaches missions from a basis of missiological principles with biblical undergirding," Kammerdiener said.

"A desperate need of our time is to not get carried away with rhetoric and fail to analyze the Bible.

"Thurmon has kept his feet on the ground and kept us on track. He has made his mark by

calling us back and being sure we made the proper mid-course corrections so we don't miss the mark," he said.

Like most missionaries, however, retirement will be more a change of scenery than anything else.

The Bryants are relocating to Fort Worth, Texas, where he will serve as a liaison between FMB and students and faculty of Southwestern Seminary.

He also will continue his work with the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), coordinating BWA President Nilson Fanini's efforts to stir Baptists worldwide to a greater emphasis on evangelism.

Bryant sees bright days ahead for Southern Baptist foreign missions.

Hopeful trends to which he points include surging numbers of baptisms and new churches overseas, as well as record numbers of Baptists in the United States and overseas stepping forward to be missionaries.

"I believe the Lord has brought Southern Baptists through difficult times to bring us to a point where we'd all be working together for a common cause and purpose," he said.

"I just hope the Lord lets me see some of the exciting things that are about to take place."

## Hotel chain to pull ads after complaints made

ATLANTA (BP) — Holiday Inn Worldwide has canceled plans for further use of a television commercial which features an actress portraying a transsexual.

The commercial, which aired during the Super Bowl, was designed to introduce the hotel chain's renovation program, but generated hundreds of protest calls to local franchisees as well as the corporation's Atlanta headquarters.

Philip Roberts, interfaith witness director for the Home Mission Board, helped sound the alarm that generated many of those calls.

"I read about plans for the commercial on Friday and began calling pastors and friends across the country urging them to register their outrage at this use of perversity in advertising," Roberts told Baptist Press.

"Apparently the response was overwhelming in that Holiday Inn apologized and pulled the commercial less than 48 hours after it aired," he said.

The commercial featured a supermodel-like transsexual surprising her/his former classmates at a class reunion, although according to media reports a woman played the transsexual.

Holiday Inn issued a new release Tuesday announcing it planned to "discontinue any further broadcast of the Super Bowl ad."

In a letter to John Chandler, Holiday Inn vice president of marketing, Roberts applauded the decision to cancel the spot but requested a meeting with Holiday Inn officials to explain "why we oppose it so vehemently."

"Obviously Holiday Inn, which purports to be a family-friendly company and is used by thousands if not millions of Southern Baptists, miscalculated or, even worse, ignored the views of those who hold traditional Judeo Christian values," Roberts said.

Hotel officials have said they received positive endorsement of the ad concept during testing with corporate officials, franchisees, and consumers.

"The fact that so many of us were offended by this commercial is evidence that Holiday Inn's marketing staff is out-of-touch with a large segment of their customer base.

"I think we can help them understand why such perversity is offensive to us and the negative effects it has on our culture," Roberts concluded.

## Income 'plateau' leads to mid-year cuts at CBF

ATLANTA (ABP) — An unexpected plateau in income has forced a 10% mid-year budget cut for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF).

Buoyed by rapid growth since the moderate group formed in 1991, leaders last year projected a 20% income increase in 1996-97.

Through six months of the fiscal year, however, receipts of \$4.7 million were running about 2% ahead of last year.

"Where we expected some \$14 million in revenue [this year], we are probably going to get some \$12.5 million in revenue," Ed Vick, finance committee chairman, told the Fellowship's Coordinating Council Jan. 31.

Stunned by the budget shortfall, Council ministry groups struggled during a three-day meeting in Atlanta to cut spending for the remaining six months of the current year by 20%.

The council also authorized taking up to \$1.5 million from a global-missions reserve fund to cover both the budget shortfall and higher-than-budgeted

costs for supporting the Fellowship's 140 missionaries.

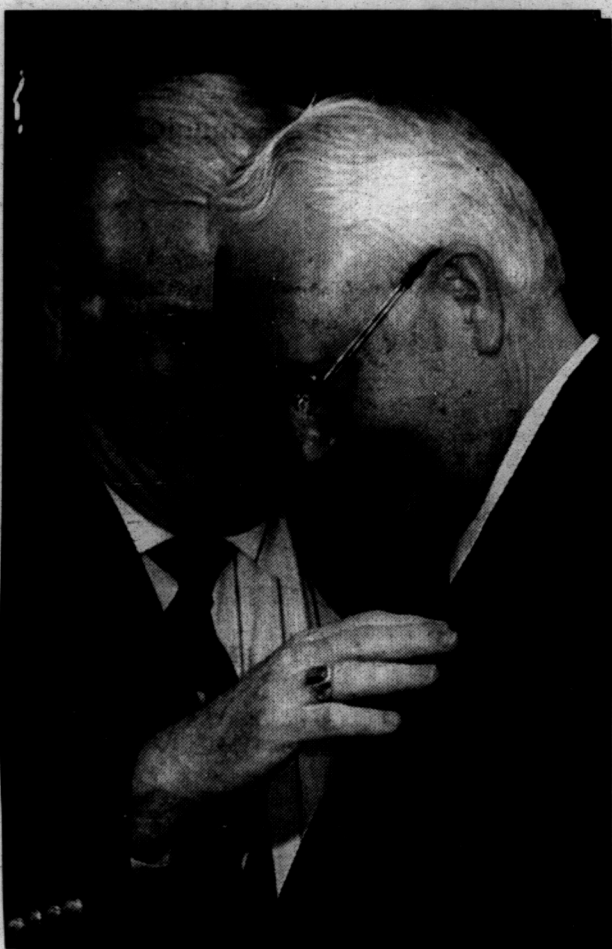
The global missions reserve fund, accumulated from unexpended gifts to past years' Global Missions Offering, is about \$9 million, said finance committee member Bill Owen of Ardmore, Okla..

The cutbacks will mean layoffs of two support-staff members at the Fellowship's Atlanta offices and a hiring freeze for three other jobs that have been approved but not yet filled, said Fellowship spokesman David Wilkinson.

While no missionaries will lose their jobs, the cutbacks will postpone some projects and delay hiring of a badly needed coordinator of volunteer missions, said Keith Parks, missions coordinator.

Parks predicted the financial picture will improve during the second half of the year. "I think this is a temporary plateau," he said.

"I don't think it's a trend at all," Parks added.



ON TO NEW THINGS — Thurmon Bryant (right), who retired Jan. 31 after 36 years with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board receives well wishes from fellow missionary Bill Morgan. (BP Photo by Bill Bangham)



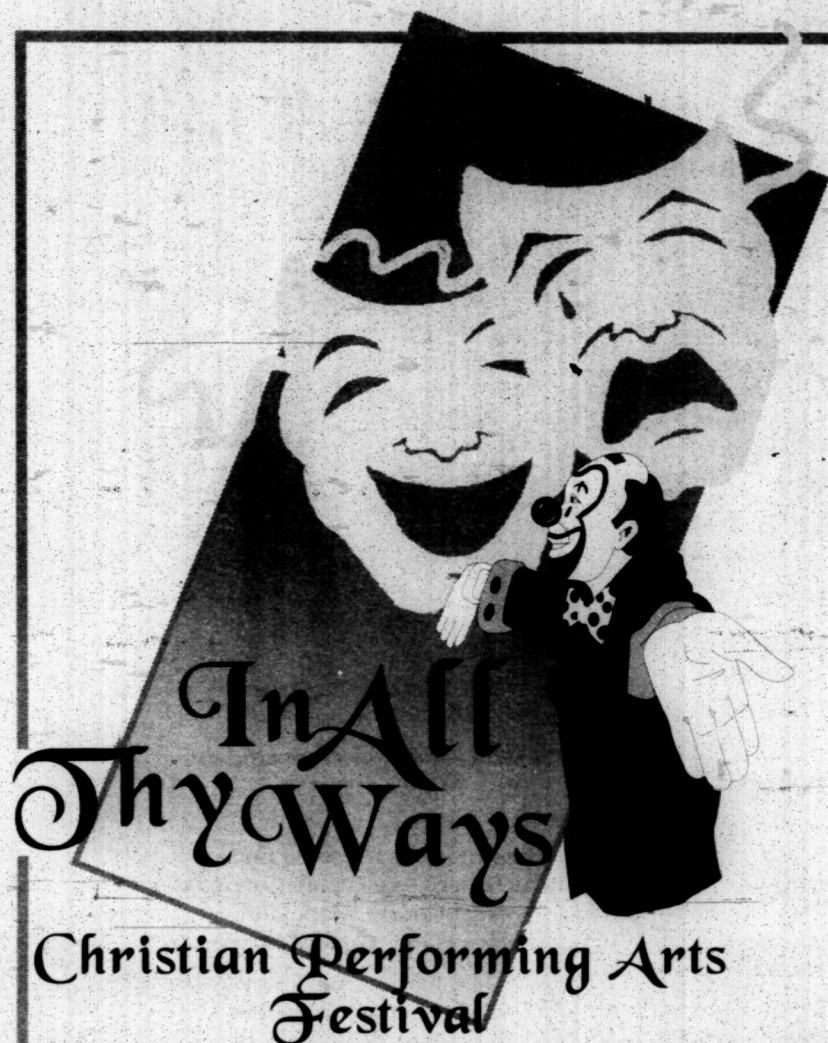
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

February 13, 1997

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.



**February 28 - March 1**  
**Woodland Hills**  
**Baptist Church, Jackson**

Offering conferences for both the  
experienced and inexperienced in:

*Drama*  
*Clowning*  
*Puppetry*  
*Church Recreation*

For further information contact the  
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department  
of the MBCB at  
968-3800 in Jackson  
or toll-free 1-800-748-1651.

## 1997 Young Ringers Festival

**Saturday, March 1**  
**First Baptist Church**  
**Brandon**  
**Clinician**  
**Victor Thompson**  
*Director of Worship and Fine Arts*  
**Trinity United Methodist Church**  
**Huntsville, Ala.**

For further information contact the  
Church Music Department  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
P. O. Box 530  
Jackson, MS 39205  
601/968-3800 800/748-1651  
Jerry Talley, Handbell Contract Consultant  
L. Graham Smith, Director  
Church Music Department



## State Singles Rally

**FEBRUARY 28, 1997**  
**RIDGECREST BAPTIST, MADISON**  
**7 P.M. TO MIDNIGHT**

### FEATURING:

- "Consistent Ministries for Singles"  
– Joey Rodgers
- "Recreation Ideals for Singles"  
– Phil Thurman
- Comedy by Al Fike
- Music by Manna
- A brief appearance by Elvis

Cost is \$5 by February 24  
or \$7 at the door.

Make check payable to:  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
and mail to:  
Glenn Shows, MBCB  
P. O. Box 530  
Jackson, MS 39205-0530

## GA Mother/Daughter Weekend Celebration

**March 7 - 8, 1997 (5 p.m., Friday - noon, Saturday)**

*GAs Grades 1 - 6, come to a*  
*Camp Garaywa Birthday Celebration*

**Registration: \$23 per person - Deadline: Monday, February 24, 1997**  
*No refunds after deadline, however substitutions may be made.*  
*(Duplicate this registration form as needed.)*

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daughter's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
In case of emergency contact/phone number \_\_\_\_\_ /  
Church Name \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: Number of persons \_\_\_\_\_ x \$23 ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (total enclosed)

**Make checks payable to WMU**

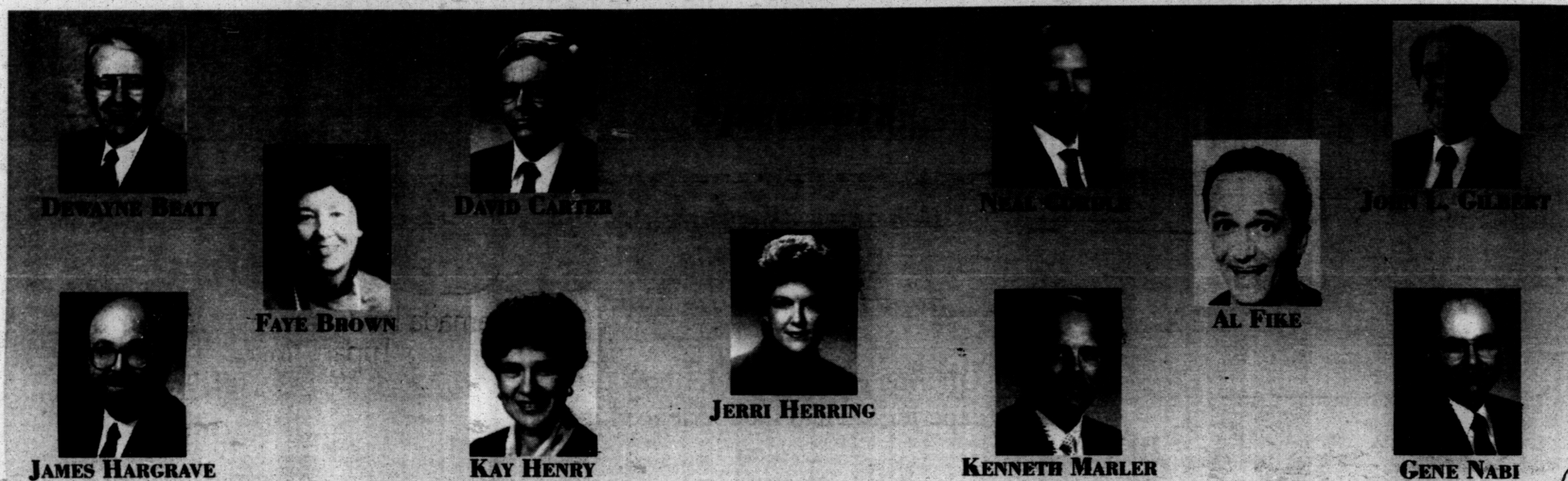
**Send to: WMU - GA Mother/Daughter Weekend, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530**



# Institute for Equipping Churches

## B E Y O N D 2 0 0 0

February 27 - March 1, 1997 Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Madison



The purpose of the Institute for Equipping Churches Beyond 2000 is to provide quality training at one place and time for as many people as possible.

Your church will benefit in many ways from this time of training. Workers do a better job and tend to serve longer when they are trained. Pupils are happier and more attentive when their leaders are trained.

Your participation in this institute is most warmly requested. The difference in churches is leaders and the difference in leaders is training!

### THURSDAY

8:30-11:30 a.m.  
**Senior Adult Rally**  
Johnnie Foster, Dewayne Beaty, Faye Brown

9:00-11:30 a.m.  
**Preschool/Children's Forum**  
James Hargrave  
Kay Henry

2:00-4:00 p.m.  
**First Contact**  
Kay Henry

**WMU Leadership Team Update**  
WMU State Staff

2:00-4:30 p.m.  
**Doctrine Study Overview**  
John Gilbert

5:00-6:45 p.m.  
**Pastor/Staff Banquet**  
Bill Causey

5:45-6:45 p.m.  
**Minister's Wives Seminar**  
Rhonda Kelley

7:00-8:00 p.m.  
**Fresh Encounter Overview**  
David Carter

7:00-9:00 p.m.  
**Age Group Teaching Series**  
How to teach preschoolers using the resource  
*Love, Laughter and Learning*-Kay Henry  
How to teach children using the resource  
*Crayons, Computers and Kids*-James Hargrave  
How to teach teenagers using the resource  
*Connected, Committed and a Little Bit Crazy*-Mark Lott  
How to teach adults using the resource  
*Vision, Variety and Vitality*-Neal Cordle

8:00-9:00 p.m.  
**Experiencing God Overview**  
David Carter

### FRIDAY

9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
**Growth Spiral**  
Ken Marler

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
**MasterLife Overview**  
David Carter

9:00-11:30 a.m.  
**Truth Matters Overview**  
Ron Mumbower

**Special Education**  
Gene Nabi

**Preacher's Conference**  
Equipping Team  
**Women's Celebration**  
Rhonda Kelley

1:00-3:00 p.m.  
**Preacher's Conference**  
Equipping Team

• **Women's Celebration (cont.)**  
Rhonda Kelley  
**Truth Matters**  
Ron Mumbower

6:00-9:00 p.m.  
**Drama Festival**-Woodland Hills BC  
Wes Pegues

7:00-9:00 p.m.  
**SS Directors**  
Jerri Herring  
**Outreach Directors**  
Ken Marler

**DT Adult Resources Showcase**  
David Carter  
**Singles Ministries**  
Joey Rodgers

10:00 p.m.-midnight  
**Singles Rally**  
Al Fike

### SATURDAY

9:00-11:00 a.m.  
**DT Director Seminar**  
Mose Dangerfield

**WMU Leadership Team Update**  
WMU State Staff

9:00-11:30 a.m.  
**How to Make the Most Out of**  
**Sunday School Age Group Curriculum**  
Neal Cordle, Mark Lott,  
James Hargrave, Kay Henry

9:00 a.m.-noon (cont.)  
**Sunday School Directors**  
Jerri Herring  
**Outreach Directors**  
Ken Marler

10:00-11:00 a.m.  
**Family Ministry Overview**  
Glenn Shows

11:00 a.m.-noon  
**Making Love Last Forever Overview**  
Glenn Shows

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Dewayne Beaty**-min. with sr. adults, Longview, TX  
**Faye Brown**-author, humorist, Moundsville, AL  
**David Carter**-adult DT specialist, BSSB  
**Neal Cordle**-adult consultant, BSSB  
**Mose Dangerfield**-DT director, MBCB  
**Al Fike**-comedian, Garland, TX  
**Johnnie Foster**-dramatist, Aberdeen, MS  
**John Gilbert**-consultant, BSSB  
**James Hargrave**-children's consultant, BSSB  
**Kay Henry**-preschool consultant, BSSB  
**Jerri Herring**-consultant, BSSB  
**Rhonda Kelley**-professor, NOBTS, New Orleans, LA  
**Chuck Kelley**-president, NOBTS, New Orleans, LA  
**Mark Lott**-youth consultant, MBCB  
**Ken Marler**-consultant, BSSB  
**Ron Mumbower**-min. with counseling, Jackson, MS  
**Gene Nabi**-special education consultant, BSSB  
**Joey Rodgers**-min. with singles, Jackson, MS  
**Glenn Shows**-DT consultant, MBCB



## TEACHING WITH VISION WORKSHOPS

### PURPOSE

To equip Sunday School and other Bible study leaders and teachers to teach with a vision for fulfilling God's mission in the world. Each person will be trained to facilitate a training session back in his/her church.

Teaching With Vision is for General Sunday School leaders, including pastor/staff, Sunday School director, adult, youth, children, preschool teachers/department leaders.

### LOCATIONS

April 5

Calvary Baptist Church, Tupelo

First Baptist Church, Holly Springs

N. Greenwood Baptist Church, Greenwood

April 12

Fairview Baptist Church, Columbus

Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church, Meridian

Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson

April 19

First Baptist Church, McComb

First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

First Baptist Church, Gulfport

### FACILITATORS

State and National Sunday School leaders



Ann Edwards



David Apple



Darrell Vandergriff

### SPECIAL RESOURCES

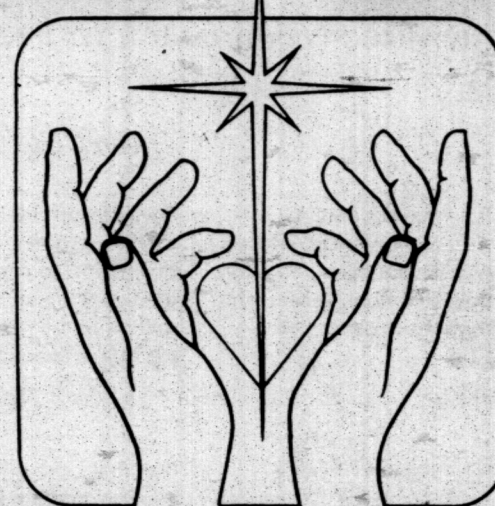
Teaching With Vision resources for interactive learning will be provided free for churches who schedule a Teaching With Vision Workshop in their church following the regional training.

### CUTTING EDGE

Teaching With Vision is not the usual training. New resources and approaches which can multiply training and create a new sense of purpose and mission in Bible Study will be provided.

## MISSISSIPPI ACTEENS CONVENTION

Hand In *Hand* With God



Ramada Inn Convention Center  
Tupelo, Miss.

**April 18-19, 1997**

### Special Guests

\* Russell & Melinda Kyzar, missionaries

\* Jan Turrentine, editor of Accent

\* "Fishermen," Mississippi State BSU musicians

Register by April 4 using the form below:

### MAC Registration Form

Church/Association \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please attach a list with names of girls and leaders attending.**

No. of Acteens/Leaders \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25/person = Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Fee includes program fee, room and one meal.)

Mail check made payable to **WMU** to:

MAC, WMU

P. O. Box 530

Jackson, MS 39205-0530



### Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

April 11-12, 1997

4 p.m., Friday - noon, Saturday

Cost: \$50 - lodging, 3 meals

\$35 - meals only

\$20 - no meals, no lodging

Limited rooms are available on a first-come-first-served basis.  
Full refunds until March 11 (transferrable registrations only thereafter).

For further information or a registration form, contact the WMU Department  
P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530, 601/968-3800 or toll free 800/748-1651.



# Pray this day for...

February 14-27, 1997

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

"May God open our eyes to see what the holy ministry of intercession is....may He give us a large and strong heart to believe what mighty influence our prayers can exert..."

With Christ in the School of Prayer by Andrew Murray

For Baptist Seminaries, Colleges, Schools Emphasis Day sponsored by the BSSB. Pray that these schools will have a strong Christian influence on all the young people who attend them.

For Volunteers in Missions Day. (Brotherhood Emphasis) Praise: In a province of China, during the first 9 months of the year, over 60,000 new believers were baptized. More than 1/2 were young people.

Pray that the door for witness and ministry in Russia will remain open. Pray for President Boris Yeltsin who supports freedom of religion.

For missionary mother Karen Stanhope, Dominican Republic, as she teaches 4 of their 5 children. Ask that Karen be given an extra measure of strength as she balances her role as mother and teacher.

Seven teams are showing the "Jesus" film in Ethiopia. Pray that they can reach their goal of reaching all 44 million of the nations' people by the year 2000.

Pray that God will use a training program in construction management that is being implemented in Eastern and Southern Africa to create good relationships and opportunities of witness.

A Mongolian pastor counts 5,000 believers in 40 congregations in the country which had only 2 or 3 believers in 1989. Pray that God will deliver Mongolian churches from the factions that plague them.

For the girls of new missionaries Brian & Kathy Proctor as they make new friends and begin at a new school in S Korea. Pray that the whole family will be aware of God's presence and purpose for them.

For the Directors of Missions Interpretation Meeting; Camp Garaywa; 10 am, February 20-noon, 21st, sponsored by Missions Extension and Associational Missions Dept.

For Institute for Equipping, Feb. 17-Mar. 1; Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Madison, 1 p.m., 27th-3 p.m., 1st, sponsored by Equipping Team.

Muslims occupy more than 1/5 of the world land area. With an estimated 5 to 6 million adherents in the US, experts agree that if current trends continue, Islam will become the second largest religion in our nation by the year 2000.

Last month Bishop Ting retired as president of the China Christian Council. Dr. Zao, the former vice-president was elected president. Pray that Dr. Zao may be wise and empowered as he leads the Council.

For Church Weekday Education Clinic, FBC, Hattiesburg; 9 am-3 pm, sponsored by the Discipleship & Family Ministry Department.

For Youth Four-Part Festival; Woodland Hills BC, Jackson; 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., sponsored by the Church Music Dept. For GA/Acteens Day; Miss. College; 11 a.m.-3 p.m., sponsored by WMU.



## APRIL

4-83 MISS JENNIFER L. JOHNSTON, Caixa Postal 2053 Jockey 64.049-970 Teresina, PI, BRAZIL  
Parents: F. Vincent & Sharon B., Conference/Encampment

9-91 MR. JOHN M. CURTIS  
B. P. 130, Tenkodogo, BURKINA FASO  
Parents: Clifton F. & Cathy P., Agriculture

15-81 MR. JOEL K. GLAZE  
MR. SETH R. GLAZE  
Bolanos 141, 1407 Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA  
Parents: David J. & Gloria M., Media Promotion

17-80 MR. JACOB W. WALLACE  
Apartado Aereo 51687, Bogota, COLOMBIA  
Parents: Karl W. & Peggy V., Mission Administration

19-80 MISS BETHANY A. PEVEY  
P.O. Box 9414, Dar es Salaam, TANZANIA  
Parents: Frank D., Jr. & Jerry Anne H., Mission Administration

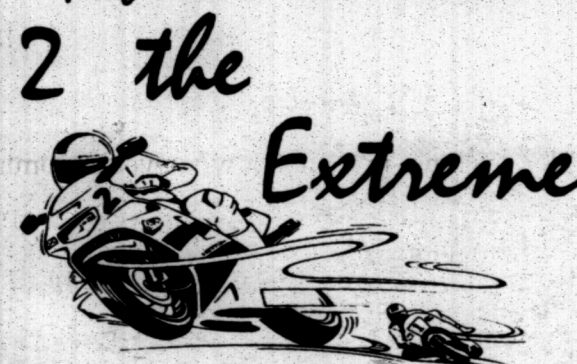
21-82 MR. JOEL B. COLLINS, c/o ACS Suriname  
P.O. Box 02-5567, Miami, FL 33102-5567  
Parents: Charles & E. Suzanne, General Evangelism

21-81 MR. BENJAMIN D. STACY  
C.P. 19507, 80230-970 Curtiba, PR, BRAZIL  
Parents: Roger D. & S. Penelope, Church Starting

24-83 MR. JUSTIN A. MARTIN  
Casilla de Correo 5, 8400 San Carlos de Bariloche, ARGENTINA  
Parents: Asbury H., Jr. & J. Hope, General Evangelism

28-87 MISS REBEKAH LAUREN RAY, UEC-Baptists  
3-AL Tolstago Street, Kiev-4, 252004, UKRAINE  
Parents: Mike & Linda, Religious Education Promotion  
SERVE IN WESTERN REPUBLICS

## Gulfshore Youth Weeks '97



### Camp Dates

June 2-6  
June 6-10  
June 10-14  
June 14-18  
June 19-23  
June 23-27

**Purpose:** To use creative Bible study, special interest studies, fun recreation, and evangelistic celebrations in a retreat setting to challenge youth to live for God.

**Cost:** \$128 per person

**Registration:** Begins March 1, 1997

For more information contact Mark Lott or Jim Didlake at 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800.

# HOUSE TOPS



## VAN, PUPPETS NEEDED

Editor:

I am a Mississippian who has gone to the home mission field in Vermont.

I grew up in Iuka and served churches in Lula, McComb, and Florence.

We are a small church with big dreams. We are wanting to expand our ministry and need a 15 passenger van to help us fulfill those purposes.

If your church or as an individual can help us locate an inexpensive van in good condition, please call or write us at:

The Baptist Fellowship, P O Box 344, Randolph, VT 05060, or call (802) 728-5318.

A second request — we are also looking for hand puppets that are unused and need a home.

Jerry W. Smith, pastor  
The Baptist Fellowship  
Randolph, VT

## PK STATEMENT OF FAITH

Editor:

I would like to respond to a letter to the editor in the January 16 edition of "The Baptist Record" that included the statement "PK is a movement that is doctrinally unsound and without a theology of the church that will build Christ's church in the sense of the New Testament."

The Promise Keepers Statement of Faith is:

1. We believe that there is one God eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

2. We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man and that it is verbally inspired, authoritative, and without error in the original manuscripts.

3. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, his virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, death on

the cross to provide for our redemption, bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, present ministry of intercession for us, and his return to earth in power and glory.

4. We believe in the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, that he performs the miracle of new birth in an unbeliever and indwells believers, enabling them to live a godly life.

5. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but because of sin, was alienated from God. That alienation can be removed only by accepting through faith alone God's gift of salvation which was made possible by Christ's death.

Cliff Barker  
Philadelphia

## PK CHANGES LIVES

Editor:

I am writing in response to a letter published in the Jan. 16 edition of "The Baptist Record" concerning Promise Keepers (PK).

As for PK being "doctrinally unsound," perhaps the editor could publish the five point "Statement of Faith" that PK uses as the cornerstone of their ministry.

That brings me to "dissolving the barriers of denominationalism."

PK is not a church. In fact the purpose of PK is to get men involved in doing the Lord's work in the context of the local church whatever denomination that may be.

Imagine the harvest if the different denominations worked together to spread the Gospel throughout this country and the world.

I think that is what Jesus meant in John 17:23!

My life was changed forever at a PK conference in Houston in 1995.

It was not changed by PK but by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I did not see any pagans or Mormons at that conference or at the conference I attended in New Orleans in 1996, but if any were there I can only pray that

they were among the thousands I saw come forward and publicly accept Jesus as Lord and Savior. Praise God!

In closing I would like to encourage men all over this state to find out about PK for themselves and join the million or so others around the country who strive daily to be Godly men, Godly husbands, and Godly fathers by making a commitment to keeping "The Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper."

Ed Bremer  
Wiggins

## POOR CONNECTION

Editor:

In reference to Bennett Blanton's letter in the Jan. 16 edition of "The Baptist Record," I heartily agree with his assessment of Catholicism and Mormonism.

However, I cannot understand how he connected these two false religions to the Promise Keepers (PK) ministry. I suspect he is getting his information from Rev. Chambers' radio broadcast.

It is apparent that Blanton has never attended a PK conference or he could not have applied Gal. 1:9 to PK activities.

It is also evident that he has never read PK's statement of faith and commitment or he would have never referred to II Cor. 6:14 in connection with PK belief.

Maybe Blanton should apply Gamaliel's warning to the council to the PK situation (Acts 5:33-39).

L. V. Shoemaker  
Collins

## THANKS FOR SUPPORT

Editor:

Thank you for the excellent (Jan. 23) article on the ministry of Tony and Karen Burns Gray, missionaries to Brazil.

Tony and Karen graduated from William Carey College (WCC) in 1978 and Karen was honored recently at homecoming festivities for beginning the House of Hope as a ministry to those dying of aids.

In its statement of purpose, WCC declares its aims of

"preparing individuals for leadership in the denomination," of "promoting the practice of Christian principles," and of "carrying out the Great Commission."

When we read of the work of missionaries such as Tony and Karen Gray, we are reawakened to our great responsibilities as faculty and staff of a Baptist institution to train and equip our students.

Thank you Mississippi Baptists for your support of our Baptist colleges which are very much in the business of training Christian young people to honor the Great Commission and make a difference in the lives of those they touch.

Donna Wheeler, WCC  
Alumni Director  
Hattiesburg

## PLEDGE OF PURITY

Editor:

On Sunday, Jan. 19, at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in New Hope, I saw 22 beautiful youth pledge their hearts, and lives to God, their parents, and church to keep themselves "sexually pure" until marriage.

I know this was not done or taught hurriedly or lightly.

After many prayers and deep love and desire of concern for our youth, Beth Crane introduced them to "True Love Waits," that took many months of study.

Our children and youth are faced with many pressures and decisions and to take such a stand one needs to be commended.

Our children are our heritage and gift from God so, why, shouldn't we give them our greatest time, to pray, listen, and love them unconditionally.

Thank you, again, for the beauty and bold stand you graced our church with this night.

This being "Sanctity of Right to Life Day" and thinking how this and other youth and children could stand and be heard makes me sad to remember the 36 million, that never got a chance to stand, at worst, to live.

Prayers and love always.  
Barbara Peterson  
Pickensville, Ala.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Letters to the editor

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (While church membership is not required, Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

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# Women's retreat set for George County

The second annual George County Women's Retreat will be held March 14-15 at the George County High School cafetorium in Lucedale. The retreat will focus on "A Seeking Heart," based on Jer. 29:13.

Registration will open at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 14, followed by fellowship with a finger-food buffet.

Saturday activities will begin with an optional 7:45 a.m. devotion/prayer service and then a

continental breakfast. Lunch on Saturday will also be served.

Keynote speaker will be Millie Cooper of Dallas, dubbed "The First Lady of Aerobics." She is married to Kenneth H. Cooper, founder of the Cooper Aerobics Center and Clinic in Dallas.

Millie Cooper is a published author who has been recognized for her work by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Health.

Doris DeHaney of Christ in Song Ministries in Pike Road, Ala., will provide special music. She is a voice teacher, recording artist, oratorio, and worship soloist.

Returning from last year's retreat will be Gwen Williams of Chocolate's Heart Ministries in New Orleans, La., as praise and worship leader. She is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary and is recognized as a

musician, speaker, and author.

A total of 17 interest groups will be offered, each of which will provide practical insights for daily living.

Cost for the weekend is \$30 per person, which includes conference materials and food. Registration cost is non-refundable. Deadline for registration is Feb. 21. Childcare will not be available.

The Statement of Purpose for the George County Women's Retreat states:

"The sole purpose... is to bring women together, crossing denominational and racial lines, to fellowship, grow in the Lord, and encourage each other in the faith and lift up Christ in our community..."

For more information, contact Ferris Woodard, 15109 Highway 98, Lucedale, MS 39452, or call the House of Inspiration at (601) 947-2155.

## Gateway, Lumberton dedicated

By Doug Benedict  
Lamar Association Director of Missions

Gateway Church, Lumberton, held dedication services at its new facilities on Jan. 12. In a little over a year, Gateway Church has moved from mission status to a self-supporting, constituted church, and undergone a name change from Trinity Mission.

Membership has grown from 40 to 170 people. The church purchased five acres of land and constructed a 5,000-square-foot worship center.

Donations from around the state include an organ, pews, sound equipment, and pulpit

furniture.

In addition, volunteer labor was supplied by church members; Trinity Church, Lumberton, which sponsored the mission; Lamar Association; and many other churches and friends.

Trinity Church Pastor Al Young preached the dedication service, and special music was presented by the Gateway choir and special groups.

Gateway Church Pastor James "Buddy" Peters reported at the dedication that the new building is already nearly debt-free, with only the Sheetrock expenses left to be paid.

"This is an example of what God can do," Peters said.

## Staff of 350 projected for new NAMB

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The staffing of the five key components, or groups, of Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) North American Mission Board (NAMB) has been announced.

Each group will be headed by a vice president who will be a part of the senior management group of NAMB, projected to employ a total of 350 people.

The Implementation Task Force (ITF), a 10-member group appointed by the SBC Executive Committee to assist SBC agencies affected by the restructuring begun in 1995, reported Jan. 30 the NAMB staffing will entail:

◆ Evangelization Group, 56 positions in four divisions: 1) Direct Evangelism, 2) Church Evangelism, 3) Campus Evangelism and 4) Ministry Evangelism. Ministry, evangelism replaces the current Home Mission Board's (HMB) ministry division and will oversee such areas as chaplaincy, Abortion Alternatives and Baptist centers.

◆ Church Planting Group, 26 positions in three divisions:

1) Leadership Enlistment and Training, 2) Strategy and Resource Development and 3) New Congregation Implementation.

◆ Media and Missions Education Group, 122 positions in five divisions. The largest division will be the media technology division, most of whom will be housed in Fort Worth, Texas, at the current Radio and Television Commission facilities. The other four divisions will be 1) Public Relations, 2) Publishing, 3) Missions Education and 4) Media Strategy, all to be located in the HMB's current facility in Alpharetta, Ga.

◆ Strategic Planning and Mobilization Group, 44 positions in four divisions: 1) Associational Planning, 2) Strategic Focus Cities, 3) Strategic Planning Coordination

and Research and 4) Volunteer Mobilization.

◆ Business Services Group, 86 positions in five divisions: 1) Finance and Accounting, 2) Human Resources, 3) Information Services, 4) Church Loans and 5) Marketing Services.

Additionally, an Executive Group will have 16 positions, including the NAMB president, and all vice presidents and support staff. Currently, another 13-member group, the NAMB Incorporators, is working toward a recommendation for NAMB president to be made to the new agency's trustees this June, once NAMB is formally

launched at the end of June's SBC annual meeting in Dallas.

While the ITF has estimated severance costs for the NAMB merger staff reductions will be about \$2.5 million, ITF officials have said the net savings of the overall SBC restructuring, after all expenses, will be approximately \$34 to \$41 million over five years.

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**PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC.** If interested send resume to: New Zion Baptist Church, 12011 New Zion Rd, Crystal

Springs, MS 39059. Phone: 601-892-1246.

**CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH** of Eureka, Missouri is prayerfully accepting resumes until March 15, 1997 for a dynamic, full-time Youth/Music Minister to serve in a rapidly growing community. Send resumes to Central Baptist Church, PO Box 66, Eureka, MO 63025, Attn: Search Committee.

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**EXPERIENCED FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC/YOUTH.** Send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, 1601 Chickasawba, Blytheville, AR 72315 ATTN: Pastor.

**FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC AND YOUTH** wanted. Contact the church office for informational packet or send resume to Temple Baptist Church, 15120 Hwy. 613, Pascagoula, MS 39581. (601) 588-6245.

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# Bills of concern still alive in Miss. Legislature

By Paul G. Jones II  
and Elizabeth K. Holmes  
Christian Action Commission

These remaining bills and constitutional amendments could be of concern to the churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. The notation (CS) indicates a committee substitute for the original bill. The asterisk (\*) indicates a revenue bill. Senators and Representatives can be contacted at home or at the capital at 359-3770 or P. O. Box 1018, Jackson, MS 39205.

For more information on the legislative session, contact CAC at P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside of Jackson (800) 748-1651.

## ABORTION

HB 1494 (CS) prohibits partial birth abortions, provides for criminal penalties against perpetrators, and allows husbands and/or parents to sue for civil damages.

SB 2604, parallel to HB 1494, passed the Senate and has been assigned to the House Public Welfare Committee.

## ALCOHOL

H 828 (CS) authorizes the ABC

(Alcohol and Beverage Control) to exercise its enforcement authority within local jurisdiction of the state to assist in regulating sales of beer and light wine.

SB 3010 authorizes brew pubs, the licensing of any eating establishment to manufacture up to 40,300 gallons of beer or light wine a year on premises.

## CHURCH/STATE

H 631 provides that the burning of a church or other place of worship shall be arson in the first degree. This has passed the House and has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

H 545\* and 1710\* exempts churches and religious organizations from paying sales tax on the purchase of tangible personal property or services.

Assigned to the House Ways and Means Committee.

S 2655 (CS) prescribes those religious matters which may be properly included in public school courses of study.

## FAMILY

HCR 15 (as amended) provides that marriage between persons of the same sex shall be prohibited in the state and such marriages from other states shall not be recognized as valid. This will require a vote to amend the constitution during the Nov. 1997 elections.

SB 2053 does the same as HCR 15. It has passed the Senate.

SB 2088 provides that no employee of a child care facility or institution shall be discharged or receive any employ-

ment retaliation for reporting information on child abuse or participating in a judicial proceeding resulting therefrom.

SB 2849 (CS) requires the Dept. of Human Services to return a child to the natural parents or place the child for adoption within 9 months of the child's entry into foster care.

## GAMBLING

S 3042 (CS) prohibits the holding of an election to allow gambling aboard cruise vessels more than once every eight years.

SCR 501 is a resolution whose vague wording suggests to many that the Choctaw Nation could expand their casino gambling throughout the state without any state or local control. The author of the bill disputes this.

## STAFF CHANGES

Bill Kent Jr. resigned as pastor of Providence Church, Meadville, to accept the same position as Second Church, Jackson, Ga. Kent, a native of Georgia, previously served at New Hope, Leakesville. He received the master's degree from New Orleans Seminary and is presently pursuing his

doctorate through Luther Rice Seminary.

Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, has called Hal Kitchings as pastor effective Feb. 16. For the past four years he has served as



Kitchings

pastor of First Church, Middleburg, Fla. A reception will be held in his honor on Feb. 16 from 3-5 p.m.

First Church of Lyman, Gulfport, has called Dean Rominger as pastor effective Dec. 15. Rominger received his education at Mississippi State University, University of Southern Mississippi, and New

Orleans Seminary. He previously served as interim at First Church of Lyman.

Michael O'Brien resigned as pastor from First Church, Lexington, Dec. 29. He began his ministry at First Church in February 1982 and served nearly 15 years. He received his education at New Orleans Seminary. O'Brien is available for supply, interim, and revivals.

Mike Alexander has resigned as pastor of Providence Church, Lawrence County, to accept the position of pastor of Don Avenue Church, Denham Springs, La., effective Jan. 22. Alexander received his education at William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary.



Alexander

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## They Know Where the Church Is!

As a young pastor I was willing to try anything to reach people. In 1978 I heard a man named Andy Anderson talk about enrolling people in Sunday School. His "Action Campaign" said we could enroll them at the gas station, grocery store, or school yard as long as they have permission to be enrolled. I was pastor of a small town, First Baptist Church, and the idea of open enrollment sounded exciting to me.

I shared my dream with our Deacon Body. My excitement quickly faded when an old Deacon said, "Now Bro. Jim, we don't need to go out and try to enroll those people. They know where our church is, and they can come if they want to!" My heart sank. I was grateful that the other men were willing to give it a try. In one month we enrolled 76 people and our Sunday School attendance went up by 30. God had blessed our faith.

How many people live in your community that would come to your church, if someone would simply invite them? They may know where the church is, but do they know that your church cares? Jesus told us to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come. Our commission is to GO, not WAIT for them to come to us.

(In February 1995 while speaking at Trinity, Andy Anderson said, "As Elijah passed his mantle to Elisha, I am passing my mantle in the cause of Sunday School growth to Dr. Jim Butler. I know he will wear it with honor.")



Dr. Jim Butler, Pastor  
Trinity Baptist Church  
Southaven, Mississippi

## Ag Missions annual meet scheduled

The annual meeting of the Agricultural Missions Foundation will be held Feb. 21 in the Baptist Student Union assembly room on the campus of Mississippi State University in Starkville, beginning at 10 a.m. Lunch will be served and the meeting should be over by 2 p.m., according to Jim Watson,

foundation president.

The principal speaker will be Bill Cashion, consultant for human needs for the Southern

Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Cashion will discuss the importance of Agricultural Missions in reaching lost people for Christ in third world countries.

Clifton Curtis, a Mississippi native and agricultural missionary will report on his work in Burkina Faso.



Curtis

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PNIAIPFSN PFMM TI  
QIWQVB FS? NWRI  
QWMS FB TVZAQIMRIQ,  
WBH NWRI KIWJI VBI  
PFSN WBVSNA.

LWAD BFBI: OFOST

Clue: J equals C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Seven Twenty-Eight.



Union Church

## REVIVAL DATES

**Antioch, Columbus:** March 2-7; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 6:30 p.m.; Johnny Parrack will be in concert on March 1, 7 p.m.

**Hollandale Church, Hollandale:** Feb. 23-26; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; S. A. "Sonny" Adkins, director, Evangelism Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; RL and Beth Sigrest, Yazoo City, music; Billy McKay, interim pastor.



The youth department of Tylertown Church, Tylertown, recently completed a local mission project with a host of teens repairing the home of Norma Brown, an elderly widowed lady in the community. Fifteen youth, three college students, and five adults replaced rotted boards on the front porch, painted the repaired porch, and cleaned the yard. The group also prepared a meal for Brown and her family. Pictured at right, foreground, Stephan Smith and Jonathan Sellers make measurements for repairs as other teens work on porch in background. David Sellers is pastor.

Scholarships in the amount of \$500 each have been awarded to **Nicole D'Anna Lawson**, student at Blue Mountain College, and **Clay McKenzie Stegall**, student at Mississippi College. Hardy Church, Grenada, has awarded scholarships to 25 students pursuing an education toward Christian service. The scholarship fund

has been named the William R. Moss Memorial Ministerial Scholarship Fund.

**Ted Shepherd** was presented a plaque on his 20th anniversary as pastor of the Chinese Mission at First Church, Greenville. The Chinese Mission was organized in 1934-35 by members of First Church.

## JUST FOR THE RECORD

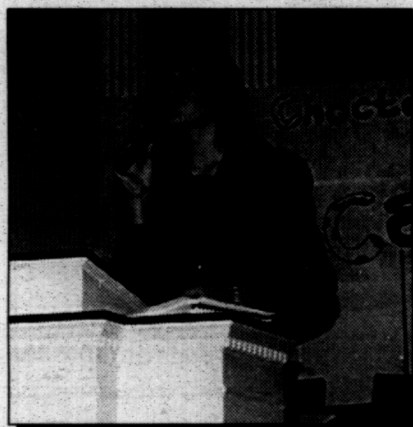
**Union Church, Jefferson Association** recently celebrated the paying off of the note on their new facility. Pictured holding the note in front of the congregation and new building is Cecil Coley (left, holding note), deacon chairman, and Rayford Varnado (right, holding note), chairman of the building committee.

Applications for 1997 summer staff positions at Glorieta (NM) and Ridgecrest (NC) Conference

Centers are now being accepted. Applicants must be at least 17 years old. At Glorieta, workers are needed May 26 through Aug. 17 or longer. At Ridgecrest, workers are needed June 3 through August 23. For additional information write to: Summer Employment, Glorieta Conference Center, P.O. Box 8, Glorieta, NM 87535-0009, phone (505) 757-6161; or Summer Employment, Ridgecrest Conference Center, P.O. Box 128, Ridgecrest, NC 28770, telephone (704) 669-8022, ext. 210.

**David and the Giants** with special guests Kellye Huff and Christal Noel will be in concert at Harpersville Church, Harpersville, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m.

For more information and to reserve seats, call (601) 469-4480 or (601) 625-8683.



Walker

**Choctaw County Baptist Woman's Missionary Union** recently held a Women's Celebration at Ackerman Church with 50 women in attendance. "Miss Pontotoc" Alisha Walker (pictured) was the guest speaker.

**Grace International Baptist Church in Heidelberg, Germany**, is celebrating its 35th anniversary on June 8, 1997. Former members and friends are asked to contact: Paul Hendrix, pastor, 2/127th Postal Co., Unit 29234, Box R192, APO AE 09102, 100746.1074@Compuserve; Tel. 001-49-6224-51516.

**World Mission Conference** will be held in Attala County, Feb. 16-'9. Churches participat-



**Antioch Church, Alcorn Association**, and Clarence Hendricks, pastor, honored two senior deacons on Jan. 12. **J. Edward Rogers** has served 24 years and **Walker Reed Sweeney** has served 25 years. Pictured (from left, front row) are Rogers; Hendricks, Sweeney; deacons (back row) are Garvin Davis, Anthony Michael, Don Rinehart, chairman, and John Berryhill.

## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

**Bo Morgan**, associate professor of History at Delta State University, will be the 1997 Edward N. Akin Lecturer in Arts and Science at Mississippi College. The lecture will be Feb. 24, 7 p.m., in the Hall of Fame Room, B.C. Rogers Student Center. Morgan will speak on "Words Are What Men Live By": Language, Common Sense, and Literacy in the Modern Academy."

The Miss Mississippi College pageant is scheduled for Feb. 13, 8 p.m., in Swor Auditorium. Contestants are Evelyn Archer, Helena, Ark.; Jean Ann Bull, Grenada; Amanda Burton, Brookhaven; Scarlett Clanton, Purvis; Imuenityan Evans, Hattiesburg; Mary Ellen Foster, Richland; Makeba Gafney, Jackson; and Ashley Love,

Brandon. Tickets are available at the door.

**John B. Duncan** has been appointed as assistant professor of accounting and director of the accounting program at William Carey College. He will also direct the Church Finance Institute at Carey College. Duncan is a graduate of Northeast Louisiana University and the University of Mississippi. He previously served as accounting department chair and assistant professor of accounting at Mississippi College.



ing are County Line; Doty Springs; First, Kosciusko; Ethel; McAdams; McCool; Parkway; Sallis; Second; Springdale; Williamsville; and Zama. Consult local churches for schedule of services.

**Joe Styron**, music evangelist, will be in concert at Kilmichael Church, Kilmichael, Feb. 23 at 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 262-5507. Gary A. White is pastor.



**Humphreys Association** recently presented Jerald Welch, director of missions, with the keys to a new pickup. This gift was made possible through donations received from individuals. This was a tangible way to express the appreciation and support of the eight cooperating Southern Baptist churches in the association. Gary Reichenbach, (pictured) moderator, made the presentation to Welch and his wife Sue.



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Ready for the King

Matthew 24

By Mark Long

The disciples asked Jesus about his prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the age. Chapters 24 and 25 contain Jesus' eschatological answer. Eschatology has to do with the end to which God is directing history—judgment and salvation. Jesus' answer showed the disciples that they should expect his imminent return, and that they should concern themselves about personal readiness and faithfulness while not being led astray by false doctrines and teachers.

**Before He Comes (24:3-6).** The disciples' questions bundled several things together concerning the future: destruc-

tion of the Temple, Jesus' coming, and the end of the age. Jesus indicated that the destruction of the Temple would foreshadow the end of the age, not coincide with it. Jesus showed that wars and such will occur, but they do not indicate the end in and of themselves (v. 6).

Jesus' response was a warning more than an explanation. He commanded the disciples to, "Watch out that no one leads you astray!" (v. 4). There is probably no area of theology more explained and more misunderstood than Jesus' second coming and the end of the age. Probably because no one except the Father himself



Long

no one will miss the end (vv. 26-28).

**When He Comes (24:29-31).** Though Jesus did not tell the disciples the chronological events surrounding his coming, he did briefly explain what would happen when he comes. After the tribulation, spoken of in verse 21, cosmic upheaval will occur. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky.

Jesus here answers the second of the disciples' questions. However, he still gave no accounting of the number of days, years, or millennium in

which this would occur. All we know is that there will be mourning (either of repentance or lost opportunity to turn to Christ), and God's people will be gathered from the world. All will see, hear, and know this occurrence.

Well, what are we to do? The end is certain, we can't bypass it, and we don't know when it will occur. Jesus gave the disciples two practical tasks to pass the time until he returned. They were to be prepared and be faithful.

**Until He Comes: Watch (24:42-44).** What's sad about all the fascination with the time and events surrounding the second coming is that it's all wasted time, energy, and money. If you really want to throw money away, send it to me. Jesus said, "You cannot suppose the hour the Son of Man will come," (v. 44).

One preparation for Christ's return is to watch, i.e., be ready at all times. Jesus said, "You also

must be ready," (v. 44). If you knew someone was going to rob you tonight, you would take precautions. Since we don't know when Jesus will come, take precautions now. In verse 34 Jesus stated that all conditions necessary for his return would take place before the people who heard him passed away. What preparations do you need to make for his return?

**Until He Comes: Be Faithful (24:45-47).** Jesus makes us stewards of his work on earth until his return. Verse 45 is a question, "Who, then, will be the faithful and wise servant appointed by the master...?" Will I? Will you? Blessings await the faithful servant of Christ, curses await the unfaithful one (v. 46-51).

The only real preparations for the end are readiness for his appearance and faithfulness to his commission.

Long is pastor, First Church, Perkinston.

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

### Be a supportive companion

Acts 18:1-4, 18-19, 24-26; Romans 18:3-5a

By Mary Ellen Powell

Priscilla and Aquila exemplified some of the characteristics of those who successfully support our God-called ministers. In churches today, the ministry of laypeople is to the unchurched and fellow church members and also to church staffs and their families. As we look at the lives of Priscilla and Aquila it helps us discover ways we can better minister to the professional ministers in our midst.

**Working Companions (Acts 18:1-4).** People who minister to their ministers work with them in the church. Priscilla and Aquila made Paul part of their lives and worked with him side by side in his ministry. It is very important for your ministers to

know people are working in the ministry with them—not for them and, definitely, not against them. Working with someone means that you have the same goals and you are on the same "team," so to speak.

**Traveling Companions (Acts 18:18-19).** People who minister to ministers are willing to give support no matter where they are or what they are doing. When Paul went to Ephesus, Priscilla and Aquila went with him. There is a special bond shared with those who come to minister with you. While my husband and I were home missionaries in Nevada, we looked forward to volunteer mission groups and summer



Powell

missionaries coming to share in the work. We were humbled by their willingness to give of their time and encouraged by their presence.

Priscilla and Aquila were also an encouragement to Paul when they remained in Ephesus when Paul moved to Caesarea. A minister is encouraged when people are devoted to the ministry. Paul was free to continue his journey knowing that they would remain and continue the work. Professional ministers can not do the ministry by themselves, they need people to further the cause of Christ, especially when the minister has moved on.

**Teaching Companions (Acts 18:24-26).** People who minister to ministers continue in the work set before them. Not only were they willing to remain in Ephesus, but they took the initiative and began discipling Apollos, bringing him into their

home. Throughout the years, my husband and I have been repeatedly blessed by people who were in our ministries and are now ministering on their own. People are true sources of encouragement to their ministers when they go beyond themselves and minister to others.

**Supportive Companions (Romans 18:3-5a).** People who minister to ministers remain in each others hearts for years to come. We see from his greeting the encouragement Paul received from working with these friends. They risked their lives for him and the churches, putting him and the Gospel above themselves. Almost as an aside, he mentions the church meeting in their home. Here we see them again ministering from their home, carrying on the work.

Priscilla and Aquila were role models for ministering to those who minister. Today, we can minister to our ministers in simple, yet important ways.

Commend your church staff

both publicly and privately for something they have done recently. Be supportive of their families. Never take part in negative talk concerning your ministers. Such talk can do untold damage. Work to make sure your church staff is provided for financially. If finances are strained for your ministers, their work can be diminished by such worries.

More than anything else, pray for your church staff and the other professional ministers you know. Pray for their spiritual protection and that of their families. Nothing can lift the heart, and the ministry, of a minister more than the heartfelt prayers of believers.

Ask the Lord to show you ways that you can be a supportive companion for your minister this week. From first, and second-hand experience, I can assure you that it will be appreciated.

Powell is a member of First Church, Clinton.

## LIFE AND WORK

### Obeys!

Matthew 21:23-32

By Thad Moore

Obedience is a foreign word to our culture, unless we are trying to obey our own desires. Questioning any authority, we have set ourselves up as our own authority. Jesus talked about an obedience that brings life, joy, and peace. Are we willing to loose our lives so we can obey him and find life?

**Obedience: Attempts to avoid it. (21:23-27).** Jesus had just cleansed the temple. The chief priest and elders questioned him regarding his authority. Jesus responded with a question. If the temple authorities can answer, he will answer them. If they cannot respond, neither will Jesus. His question

was this: Was John the Baptist's ministry from God or men? The elders knew they were trapped. If they said John's ministry was from God, then Jesus would scold them for not obeying God. If they said John's ministry was from men they would be ridiculed by the people.

Jesus was facing religious leaders that were not genuine. They did not want to have to face the validity of John's ministry and they were avoiding having to obey Christ. They were playing with the Son of God, when they should have gladly submitted to his Lordship.

**A Matter of Action (21:28-29).** Jesus continued his



Moore

response to the elders by telling a parable. The parable is a story about two sons. The first son represents sinners in Israel. They are immoral, but after they hear the message they repent and turn to God.

Obedience is a matter of action. Too often we meet, study, plan, and prepare, but we fail to obey. We sing "Trust and Obey" yet we chart our own course for life. It is time to quit singing and live obediently under the Lordship of Christ.

An astronaut was asked what he would do if he was in a life or death situation and had only ten seconds to respond. He said, "I would take nine seconds to think and then act." It is time to act. Well done is better than well said.

**More than Words. (21:30).** The second son in the parable represents the Jewish leadership. They

appear to be following God, but they fall short. They have rejected John the Baptist and the ministry of Jesus. Obedience is following through with what God has commanded, not starting and quitting, as the second son proves.

Jesus preached a message on judgement to those who thought they were righteous, and a message of grace to sinners. At this point we need to answer a disturbing question. Have we reversed the order of Jesus' teaching? We teach judgement to the sinners and grace to the righteous. Such teaching is futile. Sinners already feel condemned and the self righteous feel they have earned God's grace. We are to warn the self righteous and offer grace to sinners.

Jesus' test for obedience was the ability to complete what you started. He closed the sermon on the mount with a challenge to act on what was taught. In

Matthew twenty-five the judgement is based on what you did, not what you started to do.

**The way to the kingdom (31-32).** Jesus explained an important truth about the kingdom of God. The Jewish leaders were being supplanted by the sinners who repent and believe. Time is short. However, we have time if we genuinely repent and trust Christ.

God commands all to carry out his will, as the first son did. Some promise but do not perform, as the second son illustrates. Those who ultimately accept the message of Christ and obey are accepted into the kingdom. Performance takes priority over promise in the kingdom of God.

George Washington's mother was asked how she reared such a wonderful son. She replied: "I taught him to obey." May we do the same.

Moore is pastor, First Church, Holly Springs.



# Unusual proposal yields unqualified 'yes'

MARION, Ill. (BP) — Tim Ellsworth, 22, heard Sarah Lee Lyon agree to marry him in the usual way — he was on bended knee, a ring in his hand and love in his eyes.

That was only after Sarah, 18, read his marriage proposal in Tim's column in the "Illinois Baptist" newspaper.

In a column titled, "It's a love thing," Ellsworth described meeting Sarah last May and how she had so impacted his thoughts, his heart, and everything else in his life that he decided he had to ask if she would become his wife.

He is a 1996 graduate of Union University, and a reporter for the Illinois Baptist State Association newspaper.

Tim first met Sarah at her church, Parish Park Baptist, Marion, Ill., in May when he stopped to visit Matthew Schobert, a friend who was serving as youth minister there.

Matthew had told Tim about Sarah, then a high school senior, who fit the profile of the type of young lady Tim hoped to marry.

Their paths crossed a few times in late summer and early fall before Tim decided to ask her for a date.

On their first date, Sept. 21, Tim quickly found out why he had become intrigued by Sarah.

"I just knew right away that she was the one," he said.

Having heard about guys who rented billboards on which they proposed marriage, or hired airplanes towing banners asking the big question while they sat together in a stadium watching a football or baseball game, Tim decided he, too, would pop the question in style.

After all, he reasoned, how many times do you ask a girl to marry you?

Fortunately for him and the "Illinois Baptist" readers, Sarah said "yes" after she recovered from the shock of reading Tim's proposal in the Dec. 18 issue of the state Baptist newspaper.

"Thank goodness," said Tim in recounting the incident. "We had talked about getting married, and we both agreed to pray about it, but I hadn't actually asked her yet. I was fairly confident her answer would be yes."

Good thing she agreed.

Can you imagine the correction or follow-up story a sheepish Tim might have published for the next issue had she declined?

Sarah, a freshman majoring in elementary education at John A. Logan Community College, Carterville, Ill., recalled becoming "more and more shocked" as she sat beside Tim on a sofa at her home in Marion reading

his column.

"I was talking to a friend on the phone," Sarah said. "Tim came over, sat down on the couch and took out his laptop computer and began working. I sat down beside him when I got off the phone."

"He says to me, 'I just got

Her parents, David and Mary Lou Lyon, immediately liked Tim when the couple began dating, but the Lyons considered getting engaged after only three months of dating, and at such a young age for her, to be rushing

much as a dad can ever be."

Tim and Sarah believe they have a love forged in heaven.

For Tim, it was a woman of solid Christian values who was more interested in being a mom and a homemaker than excelling in her career.

Sarah had a slightly longer list.

"I wanted a guy who was most importantly a Christian. I wanted him to have the same values I do," she said.

"I wanted him to be a Southern Baptist if possible, to be strong and supportive and a true spiritual leader, who was willing and able to make the majority of the family's decisions."

"He also had to have a good sense of humor, a great personality and be cute, etc."

Sarah said she intends to complete college, then teach for a couple of years before having children. After the kids are in school, she probably will return to teaching.

After their July 19 wedding, they are planning a honeymoon at Grand Haven, Mich.

Tim's dad, Roger Ellsworth, pastor of Immanuel Church, Benton, Ill., will officiate.

## You can find the missing PEACE



The Prince of Peace extends a wonderful invitation to you.

### 1. His love gives us peace.

#### This is his promise:

"Perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18) When we ask Christ into our lives, his loves chases away fear.

### 2. His promise of eternal life gives us peace.

The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life." (Romans 6:23) God provides eternal life through the death and resurrection of his Son.

### 3. His promise to walk with us through life gives us peace.

Jesus said, "In me you may have peace. In this world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Jesus extends his promise of peace to us, but we must respond by accepting him as the missing piece in our lives.

You can make that commitment today by, (1) admitting you need God, (2) confessing your sins to him, and (3) by faith, receiving Christ as Lord.

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.



paper from the printers. It is just going into the mail now. You might want to check out my column on the back page. I think it's pretty good," Sarah said.

"I've been reading everything he's written since we began dating last September. So I began reading it, thinking it would be about some issue or other. Boy, was I surprised!"

In a voice literally dancing with merriment, Sarah recalled reading with ever-widening eyes after she noticed her name fairly high in the column. "Oh my," she said to Tim, turning to look at him.

After an introduction quoting the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians, considered the Bible's love chapter, Sarah read about Tim meeting her, and how much she began to mean to him.

"Sarah Lee Lyon, the impact you have made on my life is incredible. The sadness of being apart from you during the week is bearable only because I know the weekend is not far away. Part of me is missing when I'm not with you. Thoughts of your lovely face, your smile, and your laugh constantly occupy my mind."

"My days are brighter because of you. My life is richer because of you. I can't imagine life without you."

"I thank God for you. I treasure you. I need you. With my whole heart, I love you. Will you marry me?"

What girl could say no?

"How sweet," Sarah said. Laughing, she reached over to hug Tim. But he already was on bended knee to personally solicit her love. Blushing, she said yes.



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*Our pastor preaches against divorce, which I think is Bible truth, yet he remarries divorced people. I am very confused.*

There is no doubt that God hates divorce, because a Christian marriage reflects the loving relationship between God and his church. However, there are certain standards for remarriage, especially in light of adultery, abandonment, or abuse. Talk with your pastor to fully understand his position on this matter. Remember also that God is a God of new beginnings. That God doesn't want us to divorce cannot be overstressed, but the church should be redemptive of such human failings as divorce. Help find ways to strengthen the marriages in your church so that the one-man, one-woman-for-life commitment can flourish.

*Ann Landers in her advice column recently recommended "solitary sex" for singles. Is this appropriate for Christians?*

The term is "masturbation." We don't like to talk about masturbation, but we can't deny that it occurs. For

singles, this is of course a sexual option, but is it the best option? Masturbation involves an attitude that "I can meet my needs without allowing anyone else to help meet them." God did not intend for us to be so self-centered. Learning to be dependent on God to supply all our needs is the key, but turning away from masturbation can be most difficult in our sex-saturated society. God made us sexual creatures, so he understands our struggles. Frankly, masturbation is not the unforgivable sin, but it can become, like so many other activities, a preoccupation or addiction that harms our relationship with God. Find appropriate outlets to express yourself. Maintain healthy relationships with other people, and keep strong your relationship with the Lord. Look for satisfying ways to serve others, and work on your physical fitness. Avoid compromising situations, such as erotic reading or arousing videos. Know your weaknesses and flee! Above all, pray about this and when you fail, ask God's forgiveness so you can get up and try again.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.